

A

# Z E A L

FOR

# GOOD WORKS

EXCITED AND DIRECTED:

IN A

# S E R M O N

AT THE

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*March 25th, 1742.*

Printed at the general Desire of the Hearers.

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By JOHN BARNARD, A.M.  
Pastor of a Church in Marblehead.

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GALATIANS iv. 17, 18.

*They zealously affect you, but not well; ---- but it is good to  
be zealously affected, always in a good Thing.*

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B O S T O N

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**A ZEAL for GOOD WORKS Excited, and Directed.**

**TITUS ii. 14.**

*Zealous of good Works.*

THE main Design of the Apostle Paul in this Epistle to *Titus* seems to be summed up in the 8th Verse of the 3d Chapter; "This is a faithful Saying, and these Things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good Works: These Things are good and profitable unto Men." And therefore the Epistle is chiefly spent, in directing how the various Orders, or sorts of Persons, ought to carry themselves, in their several Relations, so as that they might *adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all Things.*

And this he presses upon them, from the Consideration of the grand Intention of the Gospel Revelation, and of **CHRIST**'s Incarnation and Death. As to the grand Intention of the Gospel Revelation, it is evidently to make all Men good, and put them upon doing Good in their several Relations; for, says he\*, *The Grace of God, that*

**A** **bringeth**

\* Verse 11, 12.

2 *A Zeal for good Works*

*bringeth Salvation, hath appeared unto all Men;* that is, The Gospel which is a manifest Display of the Grace of God, in the Offer of Salvation to a guilty World, " teaches us, that denying Un- " godliness, and worldly Lusts, we should live " soberly, righteously, and godly, in this pre- " sent World"; that is, It teacheth us to abandon all Prophaneness and Immorality, to deny all false Doctrines, and vicious Practices, arising from the Lusts of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eye, or the Pride of Life; which stimulate and and excite Men to do such Things as they ought not to do; and that we should *live soberly*, by keeping our Appetites, and Passions under due Regulation, that we may not be hurried away, by the Impetuosity of them, to do those Things which are offensive to God, or injurious to ourselves, or others; that we live *righteously*, by rendering unto all Men their Dues, and giving no just Occasion unto any to complain of our ill Treatment of them, in Word, or Deed; and that we live *godly*, by upholding an inward Awe and Reverence of the Divine Being upon our Hearts, and carefully attending the Duties of Religion, natural, and instituted, which we owe to our supreme Lord and Master. And who sees not that such a Walk would have a vast Influence upon all sorts of Persons, faithfully to discharge the several Duties of their various Relations, so as to be profitable unto themselves, and Blessings to all about them?

And as this is the great End of the Gospel Revelation, to bring Persons to such a sober, virtuous, and religious Life, so is it the great Design of the Incarnation and Death of JESUS CHRIST, who the *Apostle* tells us, in the *Verse* where my

*Text*

*Excited and Directed.*

*Text is, " gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works."*

So that herein we may see who they are that are effectually wrought upon by the Grace of GOD, and who they are that are redeemed by CHRIST, even those that are *purified from Iniquity, a peculiar People, zealous of good Works.*

The Grace of GOD appearing in the Gospel is not calculated to cherish and embolden Men in their sinful Practices, but to recover them from the Dominion of Sin over them, and excite them to the Practice of that which is good : And tho' CHRIST died to redeem Sinners, yet it was not to encourage them in their Sins, in hopes of Impunity, but to bring them over to the Side of Virtue, and render them *zealous of good Works.*

Having thus introduced the Words of my *Text*, The plain Truth agreeable to them is this,

**Doct.** *The Redeemed of the LORD are zealous of good Works.*

In speaking to this *Text* and *Doctrine*, I shall endeavour, by Divine Assistance, to explain and confirm the Truth under these Heads.

I. I shall offer something upon the *Nature of Zeal*, that we may not be mistaken in our Conceptions about it.

II. I shall consider what are the *good Works* we are to be zealous of.

III. Shew what it is to be *zealous of good Works.*

IV. Evidence that the *Redeemed of the LORD* are zealous of good Works. And then I shall make some suitable Application of the whole.

## A Zeal for good Works

I. I shall offer something upon the *Nature* of *Zeal*, that we may not go into any Mistakes in our Conception about it. For there is a Zeal falsely so called; as most, if not all, Virtues have their Counterfeits; and a Mistake here will be of fatal Consequence, and lead us to conceive, that our irregular, ungoverned Passions, are the Fervour of our Mind for the Glory of *God*.

Observe therefore, that *Zeal* is an equivocal Word, of a double Meaning; and they that have their Minds very much exercised with the View of the bad Sense of it, are ready to start at the mention of it, as at the Cry of *Fire*; and they that have their Minds dwelling upon the good Sense of it, are ready to leap for Joy at the Sound of it. Both may be in the wrong. We ought to consider what it is, before we either approve, or condemn it. *Zeal* is not, properly speaking, any particular Affection, or Passion, belonging to the human Nature, but rather the Heat and Fervour of them. The Word, in the Original, signifies, *exceeding hot*, which points to us, our Passions, and Affections, wrought up to their Height. Hence *Zeal* is not, in its own Nature, good; but, is either good, or bad, according as it is directed, and governed; and therefore had need to be *skilfully handled*, even by *wise and good Men themselves*, lest it hurry them beyond Bounds, to the doing of those Things, which are irregular and unjust; and prove only the raging of their own Passions, and one of the worst of Vices, instead of a Christian Virtue. Though *Zeal* is sometimes used in a good Sense, in the sacred Scriptures, as in my Text, and some other Places, yet, I think, it is used

used oftner in a bad one. Such was *Saul's Zeal in persecuting the Church* (a), that is, in the Height of Fury and Rage; and hence it is reckoned among the Works of the Flesh. (b) *Now the Works of the Flesh are these,-- Hatred, Variance, Emulation, or Zeal.* So (c) *there is among you Envying, or Zeal.*---So what we render (d) *bitter Envying*, is, in the Original, *Zeal*: And again (e), *Where there is Envying or Zeal, and Strife, there is Confusion and every evil Work.* And so in many other Places. And the Reason why it is put among the Works of the Flesh, seems to be, because most usually the Height of human Passions, and Affections, are irregularly placed, upon improper Objects, and carried out after them in an undue Manner, and Degree; and in this Sense, in which we find it often used, it seems to be a Complication of Pride and Passion.

Nevertheless, Zeal becomes a Virtue, when our Affections are placed upon proper Objects, and conversant about them, in a suitable Manner, and Degree, answerable to the Nature and Importance of those Objects to us. And hence it is apparent, that in order to our Zeal's being good and laudable, and ranked among Christian Virtues, it necessarily hath these Qualifications, *viz.* It must be guided by Knowledge, tempered with Piudence, and accompanied with Charity.

1. First, Our Zeal must be *guided by Knowledge*. Otherwise a Man is zealous for he knows not what: Which is really no other than to be governed by a blind Impetus, and wild Fury; than which, what is there that will be more likely to precipi-

(a) *Philip.* iii. 6. (b) *Gal.* iv. 19, 20. (c) *1 Cor.* iii. 3.  
(d) *James* iii. 14. (e) *Verse* 16.

precipitate a Man into those Things, which, whatever his Pretensions be, will be highly dishonourable to GOD, and injurious to his Fellow-Creatures? because “ he that walketh in Darkness knoweth not whither he goeth (a). And “ stumbleth because there is no Light in him (b). A dark Mind, or weak Understanding, and strong Passions, very ill agree together; and it is no Wonder if such an one fall into Mischief. He had need to see very clearly, who runs swiftly upon the Edge of a Precipice.

If a Man be mistaken in the Object of his Zeal, and think that to be for the Glory of GOD, and Interest of Religion, which really is a Dishonour to GOD, and tends to undermine Religion, it is evident, that the more vigorously he lays himself out, and the more Fervour he spends about it, he does but so much the more cast Contempt upon GOD, and sap the Foundation of Religion. Or if a Man imagine that to be sinful, which is really commendable, and a Duty, it is apparent, that by how much greater Heat he prosecutes and endeavours the Suppression of that Thing, by so much he establishes Vice upon the Ruins of Virtue. Zeal is our Passion set on Fire, and if there be not a suitable Measure of Knowledge to direct us when, and upon what Occasion, and how far, this Fire should be enkindled in us, it will be but a strange Fire before the LORD; and the Effects of it wild and raging. Where there is all Heat, and no Light, it doth not look like the illuminating Fire, which descendeth from above, but like that which fumes from beneath, which is earthly, sensual, devilish (c).

(a) *John* xii. 35. (b) *John* xi. 10. (c) *James* iii. 15.

*vilish* (c). Such was the Zeal which animated the Jews of old; therefore the Apostle said of them (a), “ I bear them Record, that they have a Zeal “ for GOD, but not according to Knowledge.” They truly had a very great Fervour of Mind to assert and maintain the Rites of the Law, which GOD himself gave unto them, by the Hand of Moses, and could not bear it that any one should slight and neglect them; and this they looked upon as a Zeal for GOD, and in their Heat rejected the Lord JESUS CHRIST himself; but all of this was a Zeal without Knowledge, not considering that CHRIST is the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth (b): And because they thus acted without Knowledge they stumbled, at that stumbling Stone, and their rejecting of CHRIST was no other, in GOD’s Account, than their Unbelief, and Hardness of Heart; and all the Sufferings they laid upon their Fellow-Creatures, for their embracing the Religion of JESUS, by whom came Grace and Truth, were really but their persecuting of them: So that instead of Zeal, truly so called, it was their own Passion; as it always will be, if it be not accompanied with Knowledge, to direct and guide it. Zeal is one of the best, or worst Things in the World, according as it is directed to its Object, and otherwise suitably managed. There must be therefore a clear Knowledge of the Goodness of what we so eagerly pursue, and the Evil of what we so vehemently oppose, or we shall be led blind-fold, by our own lawless Passions, and be thrown into an unbridled Rage. And then,

## 2. Zeal

(a) Rom. x. 2. (b) Rom. x. 4.

2. Zeal must be tempered with *Prudence*. Zeal is the Fervour of our Passions, and therefore tho' the Object it is conversant about be good, yet if there be no Prudence to temper, and allay the Heat, and direct its Course, it will become a lawless Fire, and an ungovernable Madness, and soon produce wild Effects, even in a good Cause. If the Passions be ever so keen, Prudence is profitable to direct. So that, in the midst of our Zeal, there is need of that Caution, (a) *Be ye wise as Serpents, and harmless as Doves.* There is need of the Serpent's Eye in the Dove's Head.

Thus, Prudence must temper our Zeal in Proportion to the Nature, Weight, and Importance of Things, lest, while we are carried away with an undue Heat about lesser, and more trifling Matters, the very Out-lines of Religion, we are forgetful of the more essential Parts thereof, or cold, and indifferent, about Matters of the greatest Importance; and so, like the Pharisees, we become very strict, and rigid, about *tithing Mint, Annise, and Cummin*, and, at the same Time, *neglect the weightier Matters of the Law*.

As all Things are not of equal Worth, and Value, so neither do all Things require, or deserve equal Heat and Fervour of Mind; nor could our Nature bear it to be constantly screwed up to the utmost Pitch; it is Prudence, therefore, to reserve our Strength, and Vigour, for that which most demands them, and is worthy of them. A great Heat about Matters of Indifference, and a Coldness about the Substantials of Religion, will argue either very gross Ignorance, or fulsom Hypocrisy.

Prudence

(a) *Matib. x. 16.*

### *Excited and Directed.*

Prudence also must be tempered with our Zeal, in our Choice of the Means we fix upon to accomplish our End, that we may not allow ourselves in any unjustifiable Methods to obtain what we are so eager in the pursuit of, or suppress what we are so hotly set against: For no pretended Zeal for God, and Religion, can vindicate a bad Action. 'Tis the highest Dishonour to God, to violate any of his Laws, and therefore, let Men pretend what they will, it is but a vicious, and not a virtuous, Zeal, *to do evil that good may come of it.* *Whosoever breaketh one of these least Commandments, and shall teach Men so,* said our blessed Lord, (a) *shall be called least in the Kingdom of Heaven.* To violate Truth, and Faith, and trample upon Justice, and moral Honesty, that we may accomplish our pretended Ends, of defending any religious Principle, or Practice, or of suppressing any Evils we are violently set against, is ourselves to become guilty of Sin, under a Cloak of Holiness. Hence Job spake of it, as a Thing to be abhorred (b), *Will ye speak wickedly for God? Or talk deceitfully for him?* Men may pretend the Cause of God, and Religion, in such a Conduct; but really all their Zeal herein is no other than their own unbridled Passions of Wrath, Anger, Malice, Envy, Revenge, and the like. And therefore Prudence must direct us in the Choice of lawful, and justifiable Means, in our Zeal even for God, and Religion.

And, again, Prudence must temper our Zeal, to prevent our throwing all Things into Disorder, and Confusion. Tho' the End we propose should be ever so right, and the Means we make

B

Use

(a) *Matth.* v. 19.

(b) *Job* xiii. 7.

to *A Zeal for good Works*

Use of in the Prosecution of it, be ever so justifiable, yet, such is the Weakness of the human Nature, that, the Hurry of our Passions, when wrought up to any great Height, will greatly endanger the throwing of ourselves, and all about us, into the utmost Disorder, without a due Guard upon ourselves, and the Manner of our Conduct. As it is said of Anger, so must it be said of Zeal, which carries Anger in the Composition of it, that it is a *Fit of Madness*, when it is let loose, and without Restraint; and the best Cause in the World will render it nevertheless so.

Therefore the *Apostle* speaking of their Zeal, tho' about spiritual Things, in the xivth Chapter of the first *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, yet reproved them for what was disorderly in their Church Assemblies, as their *speaking with Tongues*, and one *singing*, another *teaching*, a Third *uttering a Revelation*, and their *Women* speaking in the Church, and taking upon them to teach; and, said he (a), if a Stranger should come in among you, *Will he not say that ye are mad?* and he proceeded to exhort them (b), *Let all your Things be done to edifying* (c); *for God is not the Author of Confusion, but of Peace*, as in all *Churches of the Saints*; and concluded his Discourse to them, by saying (d), *Let all Things be done decently, and in Order.* That is, let your Zeal be tempered with Prudence.

3. Zeal must be accompanied with *Charity*. Charity is one of the Main, and most amiable Branches of the *Christian Religion*; yea, all Religion is nothing without it (e); and it is never to be parted with, but upon absolute Necessity;

and

(a) V. 9. (b) V. 26. (c) V. 33. (d) V. 40. (e) 1 *Cor.* xiii.

and then it is not, properly, a Want of Charity in us, but rather there is no Room for the Exercise of it. Hence, Charity is not to be broken in upon, and destroyed, upon every little and frivolous Occasion, no, nor upon any, for the gratifying our own Humour, or Passions. We are commanded, to *follow Peace, with all Men* (a), and *Holiness*; Peace is to be followed so far as it is consistent with real Holiness; where Holiness and Peace cannot go Hand in Hand, we must break Friendship with such a Peace; but yet even this does not destroy our Charity, which is far more extensive than Peace, and Friendship, but only those that are evidently unholy are unworthy of it, in some particular Instances.

It is not therefore a virtuous, but a vicious Zeal, that is an Enemy to Charity, and upon groundless Surmises, and upon the Account of human Weaknesses, and small and indifferent Matters, will destroy the Peace, and Love, and Charity, among Neighbours, and Friends. A furious and out-ragious Zeal, that is injurious and abusive to our Neighbours, is at best, but human Passion, not religious Zeal: And for Persons to take away their Neighbours good Name unjustly, and sacrifice their Reputation to their own private Resentment, and bring grievous Evils upon them, upon their Interests, or upon their Bodies, under a Pretence of doing Service for God, and his Churches, may, indeed, have a Shew of Zeal for God, but is really not a Fervour of God's kindling. So *Saul*, in his Zeal, persecuted the Churches, ' and verily thought that he ought to, ' do many Things contrary to the Name of Jesus

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(a) *Hob.* xii. 14.

of Nazareth (a).’ So the Jews, in their Zea persecuted the Disciples of Christ, of which our Lord forewarned them, saying, (b) ‘ They shall put you out of the Synagogue, yea, the Time cometh, when, whosoever killeth you, will think that he doth God Service.’ And so too, sometimes, professed Christians have persecuted one another, with their *Anathema’s* and Curses, and with corporal Punishment, and Death; and all for the Sake of some Difference in Sentiments, or Modalities in Religion, wherein real Holiness has been little or nothing concerned: And most usually, under the Influence of such an ungovernable Zeal, *the best of Men have been liable unto the worst of Treatment.*

And now, unless we can tell how to cancel a very great and essential Part of the Divine Law, and convert the most outragious Vices of Anger, and Wrath, and Malice, and Envy, and Revenge, into the most amiable Grace of Charity, this can, by no Means, be looked upon as a religious Zeal; but when our Zeal for God, and Religion, is accompanied with our Charity to others, and our maintaining Love, and Peace, and Unity, among Fellow-Christians, then is it a religious and virtuous Zeal.

From all of which we see the very great Danger of a blind mistaken Zeal, and what Need there is, in order to its becoming a Virtue in us, or, if you will, a Grace of the Divine Spirit, that our Zeal be guided by Knowledge, tempered with Prudence, and accompanied with Charity.

And having said these Things, to guard us against the Danger, I shall now proceed unto the other

(a) *Acts xxvi. 9.* (b) *John xvi. 2.*

other Heads of Discourse, in which there will be no great Difficulty. Wherefore,

II. I am to consider what are the *good Works* we are to be zealous of, or what our *Zeal* is to be employed about. And, in general, good Works are comprehensive of our whole Duty; and so our *Faith*, which is but in order to *Practice*, is remotely included in them, for that *Faith* is vain, and dead, that is without them. But then good Works more directly, and immediately intend, the Whole of our moral *Conduct*, that we *be* good, and that we *do* good; or, all the Duties of moral *Obedience*.

Let no Man, now, be so vain as to imagine, that this is such a *Preaching of Morality*, as is inconsistent with the *Tenor of the Gospel Dispensation*; for tho' we do not preach up *good Works*, as meritorious of *Salvation*, yet we do, and must preach them, as necessary to *Salvation*: These we are commanded *to maintain* (a); these our blessed Lord Himself hath taught us, and summed them up in the two general Heads, of *Love to God*, and *Love to our Neighbour* (b); and they are such an essential Part of *Christianity*, that our great Master assures us, he will not dispense with; therefore, said he (c), 'Think not that I am come to destroy the *Law*, or the *Prophets*; I am not come to destroy but fulfil; for, verily I say unto you, till *Heaven and Earth* pass, one Jot, or one Title, shall in noways pass from the *Law*, till all be fulfilled.' So that this *Morality* is the same with *Christian Graces*; only, as bare

Mora.

(a) *Tit.* iii. 8. (b) *Matth.* xxii. 37, 39. (c) *Matth.* v. 17.

Morality consisteth in the doing what is, in its Nature, virtuous and good, without any regard to the Principle, and End, so, the Grace of *Christianity* lies in the Practice of the same Duties, with a single Eye to the Glory of God, and from Principles of Love, and Obedience to God, and Faith in Christ, and so are the Fruits, and Effects, of the Operation of the *Holy Spirit* upon the Soul. But to be more particular,

1. Good Works intend our sincere Endeavour to do the Will of God, made known to us. The Law of God written on our Hearts, and more plainly revealed to us in his Word, is given to us to be an everlasting Rule of our Conduct and Behaviour; and teaches us how we are to live unto God; and it remains indispensably obligatory upon us, after that we are brought to the Faith of the Son of God, as well as before, and it never will, it never can, be abolished.

Now, our good Works are our Conformity unto this Rule, and careful Observation of it, in all its Parts, in our daily Practice, and throughout the whole of our Walk. If our Works do, in any Article, fall short of this Rule, they are not perfectly good, in a legal Sense; and such is the Weakness, and Imperfection of the very best of Men, in this Life, as that they do not come up to what the Law requires of them, but are defective in their best Services. But then, our sincere Endeavour to conform to the Will of God, made known to us, is that Evangelical Perfection which a gracious God, will mercifully accept of, in the Room of a sinless Obedience, thro' the spotless Obedience, and bitter Sufferings of his own dear Son: And such an Evangelical Perfecti-

on,

on, or sincere and honest Endeavour to live up to what is required of us, in the Divine Law, from a Principle of Love to God, and Faith in Christ, is, the good Works which we are to be zealous of; and they are the Fruits of the Spirit, produced by his blessed Influences in our Hearts, that our heavenly Father may be glorified.

These good Works are chiefly contained in the two Tables of the Divine Law, and denote, our sincere Endeavour to worship, honour, and serve God, in all the Duties of a more strictly religious Nature, and our serving our Generation, according to the Will of God, by doing unto all Men, as we would they should do unto us. And tho' many may be our unallowed Defects, in these good Works, yet if we sincerely aim at Perfecti-  
on, in doing the Will of God, and mourn over our short Comings in Duty, and repair to the Blood of Christ for the Pardon of them, God will graciously accept them, as good Works, and be highly pleased with them. So, *the Prayer of the Upright*, the great Duty of the first Table, is his Delight (a): And *to, Charity*, the great Duty of the second Table, is a *Sacrifice well-pleasing unto God* (b).

2. Good Works, more particularly mean such Things, whereby Mankind may be bettered by us, in any of their Interests. These are, by Way of Eminency, called *good Works*, in the sacred Scriptures. Thus our Saviour said to the Jews (c), *Many good Works have I shewed you*; which intends the many Acts of Service he had done amongst them, to better them in all their Interests. And in this Epistle to *Titus*, good Works are

(a) *Prov.* xv. 8. (b) *Heb.* xiii. 16. (c) *John* x. 32.

are spoken of, as of those Things which are some Way or other beneficial to Mankind: As (a) *be ready to every good Work*; which is explained in the following Words, ' Speak evil of no Man, ' be no Brawlers, but gentle, shewing all Meekness unto all Men.' So (b), ' maintain good Works, for these Things are good and profitable unto Men; ' and, again, (c) ' Learn to maintain good Works for necessary Uses, that ye be not unfruitful.' So that good Works specially denote, our being, some Way or other, useful and beneficial to those about us, and so they are comprehensive, of our doing good to the Souls of Men, and endeavouring to promote their spiritual and eternal Interests, and our doing good to the Bodies of Men, or promoting their temporal Interest.

Thus, good Works are a doing Good to the Souls of Men, and promoting their spiritual and eternal Interest. And this we do, by teaching and instructing of them, in the Things that pertain to their everlasting Welfare. So our blessed Lord went about doing good: And tho' this is the more peculiar Office of the Ministers of the Gospel, which may not be invaded by others, to be the Guides, Teachers, and Instructors of others, in the great Affairs of their Souls, yet, every Christian, according to his Ability, and Opportunity, may, with Delight, and without Arrogancy, do something in this blessed Work. So Parents, and Masters, are to teach their Children, and Servants, the good Knowledge of the Lord, and excite and encourage them to the Practice of Virtue and Religion; and every private Christian may

(a) *Titus* iii. 1. (b) Ver. 8. (c) Ver. 14.

may, at Times, have the Opportunity of direct-  
ing, and assisting, and encouraging others, in the  
Duties of the Christian Life, by their wise Coun-  
sel, Advice, and Persuasion, by their meek Ad-  
monition and Reproof, and more especially, by  
the good Example, which they set before others,  
of every amiable Virtue; that, as one expresseth  
it, (a) 'By the secret and powerful Influence of  
a living Rule, which teaches Men without  
Trouble, and lets Men see their Faults without  
open Reproof and Upbraiding, they may al-  
lure them to the Practice of Sobriety, and  
Temperance, Meekness, and Humility, Kind-  
ness, and the Fear of the Lord.'

And thus good Works are a doing good to the *Bodies* of Men, and promoting their temporal Interest. This includes in it, to be sure, our not hurting any in their Person, Name, or Estate, by Strife, or Reproach, or Unrighteousness; but then, it further includes positive Duties in it, in our Acts of Kindness to our Neighbours, whereby we are helpful and serviceable to them, in any Busines they are engaged in, or assisting to them, under any Difficulties and Burdens, that lie upon them, or, our Acts of Charity, in Alms-giving, for the Relief of the Distressed, feeding the Hungry, clothing the Naked, comforting the Afflicted, and brightning up the Countenances of those that are ready to perish. Thus *Dorcas* is commended for her *good Works and Alms-deeds which she did* (b): And the Apostle directed *Timothy* (c), to charge them that are rich in this *World, that they do Good, be rich in good Works,*

C ready

(a) Dr. Tillotson. (b) *Acts ix. 36.* (c) *1 Tim. vi. 17, 18.*

ready to distribute: And not only is this the Duty of the Wealthy, and Great, who are surrounded with the Affluence of worldly good Things, but even the Poorest may, out of their deep Poverty, abound unto the Riches of Liberality. So the *Widow's two Mites* (a), cast into the Lord's Treasury, has rendered her famous unto this Day.

By such good Works as these, doing all the Good we can, to the Souls and Bodies of others, we become the good Men, which are amiable in the Eyes of God, and the Delight of Mankind: And these are the good Works we are to be zealous of. But then, there are two Rules we must observe in our being zealous of these good Works.

1. That the Works done by us, are in the Nature of them good, and required of us. 'Tis essential to a good Work that it be a Duty and required of us: For *Christianity* knoweth no Works of Supererogation. The Works we are zealous of must be good in their Nature, Use, and End; that is, they must be what the Lord our God hath required, in the Ten Commandments, or in some other positive Law. For that which is contrary to what God has appointed, by his Command, or Prohibition, is Sin, as being a Transgression of his Law. And the Works must be required of us in particular, that is, we must not go out of our own Line, and invade that of another, under a Pretence of Zeal for good Works: For God doth not require us to do another Man's Business, but *our own* (b); and we shall but shew ourselves to be busy-Bodies, by taking upon us what does not belong to us. To be over-religious beyond the Command is

(a) *Matt* xii. 42. (b) *1 Thess*. iv. 11.

is to be superstitious; and our Alms-Deeds are but meer Prodigality, if not required of us, at the Time, and in the Degree, in which we dispence them.

2. Another Rule is, that we be careful as to the Manner of our doing our good Works; and that both with respect unto ourselves and others. With respect unto ourselves; our Frames must be suitable to the Nature of the Thing to be done, our Principles must be the Authority of God commanding us, the Love of God alluring us, the Faith of Christ exciting and assisting of us, in the Performance of our Duty, and our great End must be the Glory of God in all. For bad Frames, Principles, and Ends, will spoil the best Action. Levity of Spirit, or a Mind following after the World, in the Time of divine Worship, will turn our Sacrifices into Abominations. *Jehu* may drive on furiously, pretending Zeal for God, when it is all Self. A *Pharisee* may run about praying in the Streets, or in every House, and take Care to distribute his Alms when others observe him, and all to be seen of Men. The great Rule is (a), *Whatever we do, do all to the Glory of God.* And then, with respect unto others; we must be careful not to give any just Cause of Offence unto any, or put a stumbling Block in their Way, nor needlessly break in upon the Peace and Comfort of human Society, or of particular Persons, or deprive them of any of their just Rights: And here the Rule is, *Let all Things be done to edifying (b).*

Having thus considered the good Works we are to be zealous of, I may now pass,

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(a) 1 Cor. x. 30. (b) 1 Cor. xiv. 26.

III. To shew what it is to be *zealous* of good Works. I have said, that Zeal is the Heat and Fervour of our Affections and Passions, and then only is it good and laudable, when it is guided by Knowledge, tempered with Prudence, and accompanied with Charity, and the Object of it must be Duty required by God, and required of us. These Things being observed, 'tis easy now to say what it is to be zealous of good Works: *namely*, That it is the Heat and Fervour of our Affections under a due Regulation, about the Things that are good, whereby God may be honoured, and ourselves and others edified, and against all that is opposite thereto. Particularly;

1. To be zealous of good Works is to have the Affections warmed, in the Pursuit of every Thing that is truly good. It is to have the Soul enflamed with earnest Desires after, love to, and delight in, good Works. Thus, it is to be earnestly desirous of the best Gifts, and to do the best Things. Not that this Fire burns with equal Heat in all true *Christians*, but something of it there is in every *Christian*. This is what his Soul breathes, and thirsteth, and longeth after, that he may be better, and do better; for this he earnestly strives, and prays with the *Psalmist*, *O that my Ways were directed to keep thy Statutes; open mine Eyes, that I may behold the Wonders out of thy Law; teach me to do thy Will, O God; and lead me in the Way everlasting.* His Heart's Desire is, that he may abound in the Fruits of Righteousness, which are to the Praise and Glory of God, by Jesus Christ. Thus Zeal is an inflamed Love to

to the Things that are good; a suprem Love to God and Christ, an ardent Love to the Truths of God, and a contending earnestly for the Faith once delivered unto the Saints, a fervent Love to the Worship of God, to his Sabbaths, his House, his Word, his Ordinances, and to the Purity and Holiness of them; and an universal Charity to Mankind, unfeigned Love to one another, especially to the Household of Faith; a glowing Affection to the Prosperity and flourishing of the Kingdom and Interest of our Lord Jesus Christ in the World; and an hearty bewailing the melancholy Condition of *Sion*, when her Gold is changed and become dim, and the precious Sons thereof, comparable to fine Gold, are esteemed as earthen Pitchers. Thus Zeal is a raised Delight in doing good; the Soul standing ready bent therefore, and prepared to every good Work, taking Pleasure in being fervent in Spirit serving the Lord, and in laying itself out in the Works of Piety and Devotion, Righteousness and Truth, Charity and Beneficence, and never better satisfied than when it is improving its Strength, and Time, and Talents, in Services for God, and our Generation, and so to be always abounding in the Work of the Lord.

2. To be zealous of good Works is, to have the Affections warmed, and strongly set against every Thing that is really opposite to good Works. Zeal goes into our separating Affections, as well as closing Ones. 'Tis not only the Heat of our Desire, Love, Delight, and Joy, but the Heat of our Fear, Aversion, Anger, Resentment, and the like; and when these are duly warmed against all that standeth in opposition to that which is truly good

good, then are we zealous of good Works. Zeal is the burning of our Affections against a Thing, as well as for it ; and therefore carries in it an Heat of Sorrow, Grief, Anger, and Indignation, at every Thing that is really sinful, when it appeareth so to us. Zeal, in the *Christians* will, to be sure, in the first Place, fill him with Grief, and Indignation, at his own Sins : He will be exceeding sorry, and deeply humbled, that ever he has acted so foolish and mad a Part, as to rebel against the God that made him, that he has been so base and ingrateful to his kind Benefactor and merciful Redeemer ; the Thought of it pierces him to the Heart, and makes him to walk softly, and in the Bitterness of his Soul, and fires him with an holy Anger against himself, and Indignation at his Sin, and Revenge upon it. The Language of our Lord is that, *Be zealous and repent* (a) : He that is truly zealous of good Works is a true Penitent : His Soul is on Fire to mortify Sin in him, and subdue the corrupt Workings of his depraved Mind ; he strives earnestly to gain the Mastery over the Flesh, and can be contented with nothing less than the Death of Sin in him. So the Apostle observed of the penitent *Corinthians* (b), *What Carefulness it wrought in them, yea, what Indignation, yea, what Fear, yea, what vehement Desire, yea, what Zeal, yea, what Revenge*. And then, the zealous *Christian*, having reformed his own Heart, and Life, is filled with Indignation at Sin in others, and can say with the *Psalmist*, *I beheld Transgressors, and was grieved* (c). It is a Grief of Heart to him to see others transgressing the holy and righteous Laws

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(a) *Rev.* iii. 19. (b) *2 Cor.* vii. 11. (c) *Psalm cxix.* 158.

of God, and it inflames him with Revenge, in his holy Endeavours to suppress growing Wickedness, in the Place where he lives ; it fires his Soul to see any setting themselves in opposition to the Work of God, and vexes him to see or hear, their filthy, unrighteous, and ungodly Conversation, and he openly bears his Testimony against all their ungodly Deeds. This is, in short, to be zealous of good Works. I am now, in the last Place,

IV. To evidence that the *Redeemed* of the Lord are zealous of good Works. It is said in my *Context*, *Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify us unto himself a peculiar People, zealous of good Works* ; they then that are redeemed by Christ are a People zealous of good Works. Not that every true Christian is equally zealous, nor ought they to be so, because every one is not of equal Capacity ; yet every true Christian will have in him, at least when his Graces are in Exercise, which they should be continually, more or less of a holy Fervour of Soul for good Works ; and needs must it be so. Because,

1. Our Redemption by Christ does not free us from our Obligation to obey the Law of God, but renders our Obligation the stronger. He has not the Heart of a Christian in him, who thinketh, that Christ, by redeeming of him, meant to release him from his Obedience to God : Which made the Apostle say, with some Warmth of Indignation (a), *Do we then make void the Law through Faith ? God forbid ; yea, we establish the Law.*

(a) *Rom. iii. 31.*

**Law.** Indeed, the Christian is not under the Law, as a Covenant of Works, and so bound to every Iota as that the least Failure therein shall procure his Condemnation, for Christ has taken him under a Dispensation of Grace, and has provided for him a perfect Righteousness, by his own sinless Obedience, as well as bitter Sufferings, wherein he may be accepted. But tho' the perfect Righteousness of Christ be imputed unto him, yet it is not to release him from his Obedience to the Divine Law, but to render his defective Obedience, as well as his Person, acceptable unto God. It would be to undermine the great Design of Christ's Incarnation and Death, to suppose, that he came to free us from moral Obedience, because this would at once take away our Obligations to glorify God, and lead holy Lives. So that the Redeemed of the Lord are still left under Obligations to obey the Divine Law; and their Obligations are so far from being weakened, that they really become the stronger for their being redeemed by Christ: Because, over and beyond the Authority of our Sovereign commanding us, here is super-added the Injunction of our dear Redeemer, and the bright Example which he hath set us, and the constraining Force and Power of his redeeming Love. Christ hath loved us, and died for us, that he might wash away our Sins in his own Blood; he has purchased Pardon, Grace, and Life, for us, and that at the Expence of his own Life; and what is the necessary Fruit, and Consequence of this Love and Grace, respecting the Redeemed of the Lord, but to draw forth their fervent Affection to him, that, in the Warmth of their Affections to him, they may heartily mourn that ever

ever they have pierced him, and may be studious to please him? That is, to be zealous of good Works. Hence the Apostle thus argueth, 'The Love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them' (a).

2. A Zeal for good Works is a Proof of the Truth of our Faith, and therefore the Redeemed of the Lord will be zealous of good Works. The Redeemed of the Lord, and the true Believer, mean the same Person. But there can be no true Believer, where there is not, in some Measure, at least, a Zeal for good Works; because good Works are the genuine Effects, and Proof of our Faith. The Apostle therefore said (b), *Faith worketh by Love* (c); and *purifieth the Heart*. Our good Works, indeed, cannot justify us before God, because the best of them are imperfect, and as filthy Rags; so that no Man can be justified, in the Sight of God, by the Deeds of the Law. The only procuring Cause of our Justification, before God, is the meritorious Obedience and Sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we are provided of a Righteousness every Way equal to the Demands of the Law, and Justice of God: And it is by Faith that we apprehend, or lay hold on, or receive this Righteousness of Christ, in which we appear before God, as without Fault.

But then, there is a counterfeit and false Faith, as well as a true one, a Faith that is but a meer Fancy, or a bold Presumption: And what have we to prove the Truth of our Faith? Truly, no

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(a) 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. (b) Gal. v. 6. (c) Acts vx. 9.

thing but our good Works, without which all our Pretensions to Faith are vain, and fruitless. There fore the Apostle *James* said (a) *Shew me thy Faith without thy Works*, (that is, if thou canst,) *I will shew thee my Faith, by my Works*: — *wilt thou know, O vain Man, that Faith without Works is dead?* He therefore that has true Faith, will be, in some Measure zealous of good Works: His Faith in Christ will operate in him, to purify him from the Love of Sin, and produce in him a Love to Holiness, and so enflame him, more or less, with a Zeal for good Works.

It will be but a vain Plea, another Day, I am a Christian, I believe in Christ, and I trust to be saved by the Merits of his Obedience and Suffering, if there be not this Proof of our Faith, that it sanctifies us, and purifies our Hearts; that it deriveth Grace from Christ to serve God now in Righteousness and Holiness, as well as Grace to find Acceptance with God hereafter. So that unless our Faith makes us zealous of good Works, it is after all but the Faith of Hypocrites, and will stand us in no Stead in the Day of Reckoning, as it is of no real Service to us in the Day of Trial.

3. Good Works are absolutely necessary to, and a great Part of, our eternal Redemption, and thereforefore the Redeemed of the Lord are, and will be zealous of them. That good Works are absolutely necessary to our Redemption, is evident from the whole Scope and Design of the Gospel-Revelation, which is calculated to direct and excite us to the Performance of them. The Grace of God appearing in the Gospel, teaches them, demands them, enforces them with many and weighty Arguments;

(a) *James* ii. 18, 20.

Arguments; our very Faith and Regeneration, are but in order to them, and cannot subsist without them. *We are his Workmanship created in Christ Jesus, unto good Works, which God hath fore-ordained that we should walk in them (a).* Whomsoever God hath fore-ordained unto Life and Salvation, by Jesus Christ, he hath also fore-ordained that they should walk in good Works; he hath chosen us in Christ, that we should be holy, and without blame before him; and we must walk worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleasing, being fruitful in all Goodness, if we would be made meet to partake of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light. There is no getting to Heaven without *Holiness. Without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord (b).* Heaven is too pure and holy a Place for the Unholy, the Prophane, the Unrighteuous, the Unmerciful, ever to partake of the Joys, the Society, the Employments thereof.

No Man is or can be redeemed without good Works, which are an essential Part of our Redemption. *Christ gave himself for us to redeem us from all Iniquity, and purify us unto himself;* till therefore we are purified from Iniquity, and are become a peculiar People, zealous of good Works, we are not redeemed. To be redeemed without good Works, is a perfect Contradiction. We shall remain under the Power of our ghostly Enemies, Slaves to Sin and Satan, and bound over to suffer the Vengeance of eternal Fire, until there is produced in us, more or less, a Zeal for good Works.

Let no Man deceive you, my Brethren, with vain Words; good Works go into the very Nature and Essence of your Redemption; and your

Hearts

(a) *Eph. ii. 10.* (b) *Heb. xii. 14.*

Hearts are not enlarged, nor are you vindicated into the Liberties of the Children of God, unless you run the Way of the Divine Commandment; and serve God in Righteousness and true Holiness. The Work of the divine Spirit upon your Hearts, is to deliver you from the Powers of Darkness, and translate you into the Kingdom of God's dear Son; that ye may be a chosen Generation, a royal Priesthood, an holy Nation, a peculiar People, that ye should shew forth the Praises of him, who hath called you out of Darkness into marvellous Light.

From all which it sufficiently appears, that the Redeemed of the Lord are, and will be a People zealous of good Works. But it is Time that I proceed to make some Application of what has been said, and I crave your Patience while I bring it down to ourselves, and our own Time, in three Uses.

**USE I.** The Want of a Zeal of good Works should be Matter of deep Humiliation and Abasement of Soul to us. Because where there is no Zeal of good Works, such have upon them no comfortable Tokens of their being the Redeemed of the Lord: And if any thing in the World can be Matter of deep Humiliation, and inward Grief and Mourning of Soul to us, surely, this must needs be so, to see ourselves, or our Neighbours, our Acquaintance and Friends, our near Relations, and bosom Companions, destitute of the Tokens of Salvation, without Christ, and without God, and without all comfortable Hope in this World, of their being happy in the next. And is not this the Case of many among us? We all call our selves Christians, indeed, and entertain

tain some Hope that we are among the Redeemed of the Lord; but should we not be ashamed of our Hope, if we did but seriously consider, that, with respect to many of us, we are at so great a Distance from a Zeal of good Works, as that either we are luke-warm, cold and indifferent, concerning them, or are zealously set for the contrary?

If we look about us, may we not plainly see, that a very great Part, if not the most of our People, have a Fervour of Mind carrying them out after that which is evil, and sinful, whether they think so or no? Whence else is their eager Pursuit of the World, at all Hazards; their Unrighteousness, Oppression, Tricking, Cheating, False-dealing, Breach of Promise, and the like? Whence else is their Reviling, Intemperance, Lewdness and Debauchery? Whence is their Prophanation of the Lord's Name, and Day, their Slight of his Ordinances, and their Scoffs at serious Godliness, and their Opposition to vital Religion? Whence the ill Carriage of Persons in their several Relations, together with the Spirit of Lying, Censoriousness, Rash-judging, Reviling, and calumniating one another? Whence the many deep laid Plots to accomplish wicked Devices, to alienate Friends, to inflame Neighbourhoods, to embroil Families, and to kindle Strife and Division in Church and State? I say, whence are these, and many other Evils, that are rife in the World, but from a Zeal in many to do wickedly? They are not only unto every good Work reprobate, but they study to do Mischief, they follow after it with Greediness, and are never better pleased than

than when they are gratifying their Lusts. So, as the Prophet speaks, *They draw Iniquity with Cords of Vanity, and Sin as it were with Cart-ropes* (a).

Oh! What Pains do many take to damn themselves! If they would but take the same Pains to get to Heaven, which they do to go to Hell; if they would but serve GOD and CHRIST, with as much Zeal as they serve the Devil; Happy, happy might it be with them for ever. And can we see this Madness in the Hearts of Men, our Neighbours, and Friends; can we see them impiously contending with their Maker, and madly cutting and wounding, and damning their own Souls, and not pity them, and pray for them, and mourn over them, and lament the dismal Effects of the Apostacy of the human Nature?

And as for those that do not run the same Length with others in their Excesses of Riot, is there not a Lukewarmness, a cold Indifferency upon them, as to the Things of GOD and Religion? How cold are their Affections in their Regards to spiritual, divine, and heavenly Objects? How unconcerned are they about an Interest in CHRIST, and the Salvation of their own Souls? How backward are they to the spiritual Duties of reading, and hearing the Word of GOD, of Meditation, and Prayer? Or how off-handedly do they perform them? Upon what trifling Excuses; and vain Pleas, do they absent themselves from the House of GOD, and turn their Backs upon his holy Ordinances? Or if they attend upon them, is it not, often, more for Fashion Sake, to do as others do; or to see, and be seen, in their Finery,

(a) *Isa. v. 18.*

Finery, or, it may be, pleased with the sounding Voice, and agreeable Gesture of him that ministreth in holy Things, and without any serious Regard to the Honour of GOD, and their own spiritual and eternal Welfare?

And may we not observe the same Spirit of Indifferency, and want of Zeal, in Acts of Beneficence and Kindness to one another? How coldly do many receive the Proposals of doing Good to their Neighbours? And if it call for their Thought, their Labour, or their Interest, how loth are they to be brought to any Expence about it? Verily, such a Want of Zeal for good Works, is that Lukewarmness which is peculiarly offensive to the holy LORD JESUS CHRIST, and for which he has threatened *to spew such out of his Mouth* (a). And wherever we see such a Want of Zeal in others, and much more if we find the Want of it in ourselves, it is a Lamentation, and should be for a Lamentation; especially, when we consider ourselves the Descendants of those brave Men, who were remarkably eminent for their being zealous of good Works, as the Fathers, and first Planters of this Land were.

USE II. Let this serve to put us upon the Trial of our Zeal whether it be good, or no; and truly a Zeal for good Works, or otherwise. That there is a Spirit of Zeal fallen upon many Persons, in various Parts of our Land, is too evident to be denied. But when we consider, that Zeal is, in itself, no other than the human Passions and Affections greatly heated, and stirred up, we may plainly see, that there is something more

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(a) *Rev.* iii. 16.

requisite, than barely the Fervour of the Passions, to denominate it a religious and good Zeal. And I think the great *Criterion* to which we must bring it, is this of the Apostle, *zealous of good Works*. For, though it be good to be zealously affected, always, in a good Thing; yet Persons may be zealously affected, and not well.

And, I readily acknowledge, That so far as there is to be found, upon any, a warm Indignation against Sin, a strong Desire to be delivered from the Guilt, and Pollution of it, and the Curse that belongs to it; an inflamed Thirst of Soul after CHRIST, the only Saviour from Sin and and Wrath, and a deep Concern of Mind to be interested in his great Salvation; a fervent Love to Mankind; and an exceeding Carefulness to walk according to the Rules of the Gospel, in a sober, righteous, and godly Life; so far this Zeal is justly to be termed a *religious Zeal*; and I doubt not but it is from the special Operation of the *Holy Spirit* of GOD, who worketh in us to will and to do. And I bless GOD, that there are so many Instances of this Zeal to be found among us, possibly more than usual, both in the Ministers of the LORD being more fervent, and abundant in their Labours, laying themselves out in the Service of the Gospel of CHRIST, and for the Salvation of the precious immortal Souls committed to their Charge; and in many Persons earnestly enquiring what they shall do to be saved, willing to submit themselves to the Instruction of the Word, and therefore more diligently attending upon the House and Ordinances of GOD, as the blessed Means of conveying CHRIST, and his saving Benefits, unto their Souls. And I pray

pray the good **LORD** of his abundant Mercy, to increase them yet more and more.

Nevertheleſs, forasmuch as there is a false Zeal, and all is not a Zeal for **GOD** and Religion, that at first seemeth to be ſo, ſuffer me, my dear Brethren, with all Calmnes, and without Offence unto any, to make Trial of ſome Things that are, or have been common among us, (if we are not all impos'd upon by uncertain Rumours,) whether they are to be termed Zeal, in the religious and good Sense of the Phrase, yea, or no.

And here, be pleased to call to mind, that to render our Zeal right, or reduce the Fervour of our Affections and Paſſions under due Regulation, which is a great Part of the Businesſ of true Religion, not only muſt the Object, about which our Zeal is conuerſant, be good, but it muſt be Duty required of us, and be guided by Knowledge, tempered with Prudence, and accompanied with Charity.

And now, my Brethren, Is it Zeal, I mean Zeal for **GOD**, and Religion, rightly ſo called, to ſet up an unlearned, and ignorant Ministry in the Church of **CHRIST**, that have no Pretensions to any extraordinary Call from **GOD**, only because, it may be, they are good Men, can read English, ſpeak tolerable Sense, and give a good Exhortation, and have Aſſurance enough to go into the awfull Desk, or gather Crowds around them elsewhere? Or, is it Zeal in our People to flock after them in Droles, and turn their Backs, with Contempt enough upon their own able and faithful Ministers, which are of **CHRIST**'s Appointment, that they may gratify their vain Curioſity,

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(a) *2 Tim. iv. 3.*

or, to speak in the Language of the Apostle (a), *After their own Lusts to heap up to themselves Teachers, having itching Ears?* Sure I am, that the Divine Law has drawn a sacred Inclosure about the ministerial Office, both under the Old Testament, and the New: And therefore this cannot be a Zeal guided by Knowledge.

Or, is it Zeal, in Ministers of the Gospel, to ramble from Place to Place, where the golden Candlesticks are illuminated with burning and shining Lights, and where the true Doctrines of the Gospel are dispens'd, in Simplicity, and with Power, and unasked, yea, without their Knowledge, invade other Shepherds Flocks, and play the Bishop in another Man's Office; at the same Time leaving their own Flocks destitute of the ordinary Means of Grace? Sure I am, that such Things are contrary to the plain Laws of the Gospel; and therefore cannot be a Zeal according to Knowledge.

But stay, Sir, will some Men say, here is nothing meant in all this but Good; and may not a great deal of Good be done by it?

In Answer to which, I say, I very well know that GOD can bring Good out of Evil, and I trust he will do so. But will this vindicate us, or any Men, in doing what they, or we, ought not to do? I thought the Apostle had sufficiently determined (b), That no Man *may do Evil, that Good may come of it.* Nor will any distant Hope of doing Good vindicate our going out of our own Line, without a plain Call of Providence; because this is to go out of GOD's Way; and I don't know what Right we, or any Men, have to hope that

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(a) 2 Tim. iv. 3. (b) Rom. iii. 8.

any Good will follow upon going out of GOD's Way.

Or, Is it Zeal, in any Preachers artfully to wind themselves into the Affections of the People, and stir up their Passions, by the Powers of Oration, without conveying due Light into the reasonable Minds of their Hearers, (without which they will never be *Christians*, let their Passions burn ever so fiercely,) and to take Pains to puzzle them in their Religion, and at the same Time reproach their faithful Ministers, whom they know not, as Pharisees, Hypocrites, and carnal Formalists? What deeper Scheme can be laid to lead a People where such Men please? And truly, my Brethren, had I not, at present, more charitable Thoughts of some such, I should be ready, from this alone, immediately to conclude, that they were designing to overthrow the pure Religion of the Country.

Or, Is it a Zeal for GOD, personally to address such as are deservedly of good Reputation for Religion, both by their Profession and their Lives, and such as it may be they never saw before, and know nothing of unbecoming the Gospel of CHRIST, and surprize them with the shocking Sound, *You are unconverted, you are unregenerate, you are in a damnable State*: when, it may be, the Persons they so address are really good and holy Persons, and so what they affirm is false in Fact, or, if they should not happen to be real serious Christians, 'tis never the less false in them, because they know it not? Whose Name do such Teachers come in? Whose Spirit are they influenced by? Verily, This is not a Zeal governed by Knowledge, Prudence, or Charity.

Again, Is it Zeal in Persons, when their Fer-vour breaks out in such Things as are really no Part of Religion, or wherein Religion is but little concerned, I mean, if their Neighbours are not just of their Opinion, and Practice, yea, and Experience too, in Religion ; if they do not speak, exactly in the same Strain, about the new Birth, if they have not felt the same violent Pangs and Twinges of Conscience, and been affected with the same Measure of Humiliation, and Sorrow of Soul for Sin, which, they say, they have felt, and been affected with; presently to conclude, and pronounce, that they are unconverted, and in a damnable State, having never truly repented of Sin, and come to **CHRIST** that they may be saved by him? Such Persons may think, that they of all Men are sure of Heaven, and damn all whom they imagine are not cast in the same Mould with them : But, let me tell you, this Zeal looks more like the wild Fire of human Passions, Pride, and Self-conceit, to say no worse, than a true Zeal for **GOD** ; because it is destitute of the *Christian* Graces, of Meekness, and Humility, Love, and Charity, which are so essential to the *Christian* Religion: Nor know I any Spirit more opposite to the Spirit of the Gospel.

Again ; Is it Zeal to practise unlawful Methods to propagate a Cause, wherein, even Religion, and the Honour of God, may be concerned? May we kill our Neighbour to do **GOD** Service? Or, may we reproach and stain his Character, and blast his Name under a Pretence of advancing the Glory of **GOD**? Is the Spirit of Calumny, and Reproach, and Reviling, and Slander, and Lying, which, it is to be feared, has very much prevailed among many

many of those that have been very zealous, in the present Affair, by the great Complaints of it, (something of which also I have known, and felt,) I say, is this Spirit a Token of the Work of GOD upon them, and their being truly zealous in his Cause? Verily, my Neighbours, all the Pretensions in the World, to Zeal for GOD, will not alter the Nature of Good and Evil. Lying will be Lying, and Calumny will be Calumny; let Men do what they will. And do not such Things look like the Heat of human Passions, of Men having an high Opinion of themselves, and a low Opinion of others? And where Zeal breaks out so furiously in the unjust Censures of the Tongue, is it not very probable, that it is only the Want of Power that prevents their being as furious in the Cruelty of their Actions? And their greatest Fondness for those of their own Party, if I may use the Phrase, will not atone for this Spirit towards them that differ from them.

Or, is it Zeal, in ignorant and weak People, who, possibly, may have some good Dispositions, to run about, filling their Neighbour's Ears with passionate Outcries, and enflaming their Passions, till their Breasts swell, and are ready to burst, and their Blood is ready to fly out in their Faces, and they are almost entirely bereft of their Reason, and, it may be, join with them in one hideous Exclamation, and the best Account they can give of it is, that they cannot help it? Or is it Zeal for such Persons to pretend Trances, and Visions of CHRIST, and Heaven, and Hell, and the State of Persons in the unseen World? I wonder they have not yet pretended Inspiration also! Hearken, my beloved Brethren, do we not distinguish the human

human Passions, by the Manner of their working, and the Effects of them ; and the working of the *Spirit of GOD*, upon the human Passions, by his Manner? Is it not the natural Working of the human Passions, more or less, to put us beside ourselves, and out of our own Government, by hindering the free Exercise of our Reason? And is it not the Working of the *Holy Spirit*, upon our Passions, to direct, and regulate them, to convey clearer Light to our Minds, that we may act as Men? Does the *Holy Spirit* design to deprive us of our Reason, to make *Christians* of us? Does not he ever adapt himself to our rational Nature, in all his open Offers, and inward Strivings with us? Which necessarily suppose the free Exercise of our Reason; or how should we comply with his Motions and Strivings with us? Or, be faulty if we did not? Would it not look more like the workings of the *Spirit of GOD*, upon the Hearts of People, for them, under a deep Concern of Soul for their eternal Salvation, to retire to their secret Devotions, and humble themselves before God, in a Sense of their Sins, and earnestly beg Help from him, that they may be led to a saving Closure with the Lord **JESUS CHRIST**, by a true and a lively Faith, and to an unfeigned Repentance, and Life of Holiness, and go to their Minister to direct them wherein they need Direction, and improve their most serious Thoughts upon what they shall do to be saved, and immediately set upon the doing of it? And does it not look like an heated Imagination, warm Passions, and the Spirit of a *Pharisee*, who prayed in the Streets, and gave Alms to be seen of Men, and to have Honour from them, for Persons to neglect their Busi-

Business, and run about, from House to House, and from Town to Town, to tell the World what they feel, and what they do?

And, that I may not quite tire you, finally; Is it Zeal to disturb and interrupt the Worship of GOD, with the Ungovernableness of human Passions, and such confused Clamours, and Disorders, as have been in some Places, which it is a Shame to speak of, and shocking to think of? Has GOD no Right to his Worship because some are acted by lawless Passions? Or, is the End of Worship answered by such Disorders? Or, if we were all generally thrown into like Disorders, must we for ever give up all Worship for the future, because the End is answered? Or, have the rest of the Community no Acknowledgments to make, no Blessings to ask, or receive, because some are in such a Condition, that they have no Command of themselves? And if, indeed, they have no Command of themselves, at such a Time, what Spirit acts them? Verily, it is to be feared, that there is but little true solid Religion, at the Bottom, where the Passions of Men are so turbulent, and furious; for *the Wrath of Man worketh not the Righteousness of GOD* (a). And indeed, how should it? The more a Man's Passions are let loose upon him, the less Reason will he have in Exercise, and therefore be the less fit for that which is the most sober, and rational Thing in the World. While we suffer our Passions to cloud our Understandings, and that they will do, if we give Scope to them, we shall not be very likely to form a true Judgment, neither of Things, nor Persons, neither of ourselves, nor others; and no

Won-

(a) *Jam. i. 20.*

Wonder, then, if Persons under the Influence of strong Passions, and weak Reasoning, are left to take such Methods, as pour the utmost Contempt upon Religion, and turn it into Farce and Ridicule, while they pretend to promote it.

I have not said these Things, my Brethren, to discourage any real Work of GOD among us, which I trust I do, and shall, labour, according to my Ability, and Discernment, to promote with my whole Heart; but I fear many weak People are led into great Mistakes of the Nature of Religion, and a true Zeal about it, and I have sincerely aimed at the rectifying some Mistakes, and the separating of the vile from the holy.

And one Thing, that has greatly swayed with me to say any Thing about these Affairs, is, the fearful Apprehensions I am under of the fatal Consequence of such Mistakes, in the present State of Affairs among us, if it be not wisely managed; I mean, lest the present Heat, about Religion, sink into total Irreligion, from the ill Use, which the Enemies of all true Religion, will make of what they observe, in the irregular Conduct of some that are very zealous; and from the natural Swing of the human Passions.

The World has had many Instances of apparent Zeal for Religion, and good Men have been carried away with the strong Current, which have evidently proved, in the Conclusion, to be nothing more than human Passions, heated Imagination, accompanied with satanic Delusions, who knows how, and when, and upon what Occasion, and after what Manner, to transform himself into an Angel of Light: And they have generally, if not always, been so, when they have been

Excited and Directed.

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been attended with Noise, and Tumult, with Apparitions, and Visions, and Trances, with passionate Desires of seeing CHRIST, and Heaven, and conversing with Angels, with the Pretensions of low, and mean, and ignorant People to be influenced by the *Divine Spirit*, in taking upon them to be Preachers of the Gospel, and Teachers of others, and these admired, and followed in Crowds, from Place to Place, and with a general Clamour against the standing Ministers, tho' found in their Doctrine, and exemplary in their Lives, as Pharisees, Formalists, Hypocrites, and the like.

The human Passions rarely swing so forcibly, and far, one Way, but they recoil as far another. Extremes are nearer meeting than many are aware of. An over-boiling Zeal for Religion, and no Religion at all, have often met in the same Person. The *Preacher* mentioneth the two Extremes of, *overmuch Righteousness*, and *overmuch Wickedness*, as bringing to the same End (a). The Memory of some of us can furnish us with a flagrant Instance, of such as lay many Months, if not Years, under the Terrors of Conscience, and, at length, came out of that Frame with Light, and Comfort, and Joy, and were for several Years, apparently virtuous, and godly, and religious in their Lives, and peculiarly zealous in their Way about Religion, (b) and yet alas! after all proved very wicked Persons.

O the Depths of Satan! We had need take Care,  
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(a) *Eccl. vii. 16, 17.*

(b) *They kept the soberest Company, frequented the Ministers, held their private Meeting with others at their Places of Abode, had often the Ministers to preach to them; I have myself preached to them, now, above forty Years ago.*

not to be ignorant of his Devices! and guard against the threatening Danger of mistaking human Passions, for the working of the *Spirit of GOD*; and the burning Zeal, and hot Fervour of these Passions, operating humanly, if not worse, for a Zeal for God, and good Works. And however a prudent Guard against foreseen Danger may be scoffed at, as if we were to be laughed out of our Reason, and Religion, at once, yet I pray GOD make us all, especially his Ministers, wise as Serpents, and harmless as Doves. But I have done, when I have said,

USE III. And now, let us all be perswaded to become truly zealous of good Works. This is a Zeal that is laudable, commendable, before GOD and Man; a Zeal which GOD will approve of, and plentifully reward. Let it, therefore, be the fervent Desire, the earnest and unsatisfied Longings of our Souls, to be ourselves good, and to do all the good we can. Until we are good, we can do no good Work; The Tree must be *first made good*, before *it will bring forth any good Fruits* (a). And this we had need of all Things to be zealous about; because there is nothing of so great Concernment to us, and we have but a little uncertain Inch of Time, to get this great Work accomplished in. Our eternal Interest turns upon our being good, truly so. If we are not recovered from the Apostacy of our Natures, if we are not brought home to GOD, by a Work of his *Spirit* upon us, converting and changing our Hearts, and forming of us a-new, after the Divine Likeness, we are yet under *Adam's Covenant*, the Sentence of Condemnation

(a) *Matth. xii. 33.*

nation is out against us, and we have no possible Way of escaping the tremendous Wrath of an Almighty GOD; without this Divine Workmanship upon us, the Gates of Heaven will be fast shut against us, and Hell, from beneath, will gape wide to receive us, and it will not be in the Power of all created Nature to prevent our sinking down into *the Damnation of Hell* (a). And, alas! how little and uncertain a Time have those of us, who are yet in their unregenerate State, left us, to get the Disorders of our Hearts cured, our vicious Habits rectified, the Errors of our Lives corrected, and the Divine Life produced in us: A Year, a Month, or a Night, may put an End to all Opportunities herefore for ever. Here, therefore, we have Reason to lay out our Zeal, and Fervour, and be in earnest, in Agony of Soul, 'till we have some good Grounds to hope, that the new Man is formed in us.

Therefore, I beseech you, my Brethren, stir up yourselves to take hold on CHRIST, and his offered Salvation, now, while the Day of Grace lasteth with you. Oh! delay not; but make speed, haste to the City of Refuge, lest the Avenger of Blood overtake you. Don't think that your Tears, and Cries, will save you; don't imagine that your own Fig-leaf'd Righteousness will cover your Deformity from an all-seeing GOD, and render you comely, and acceptable in his Sight; but get into CHRIST, who giveth Repentance, and Remission of Sins.

You will never be able to do any one good Thing, acceptable and pleasing to GOD, 'till you are in CHRIST JESUS, and derive of his Fulness;

(a) *Matth. xxiii. 33.*

ness, and Grace for Grace. *Without me, said CHRIST, (a) ye can do nothing; but he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much Fruit.* If you are in CHRIST, then will he, of GOD, be made unto you, Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption; and tho' your Sins have been ever so many, and great, yet GOD, for CHRIST's Sake, will freely overlook, and forgive them all; and though your Corruptions be ever so strong, yet Sin shall not have Dominion over you.

CHRIST, now, graciously invites you to come to him, and partake of his blessed Fulness; He saith to you, (b) *Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you Rest;* He says, (c) *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the Ends of the Earth.* Oh! then, look, Oh! come to him, and partake of Grace, and Pardon, and Life from him!

But take heed, you don't deceive yourselves with a vain Fancy, a bold Presumption, a carnal Dependence upon the Merits of CHRIST, without submitting yourselves to his Terms; but be exceeding careful, in this Matter, that you sincerely yield a hearty Consent of your Souls to the Proposals of the Gospel, and comply with the Demands thereof, that CHRIST shall be your Prophet, to teach you, your King, to rule you, by his Word, and Spirit, as well as your Priest, to make Atonement for you; and then may you, with Comfort, depend upon his infinite Merits as yours, and say, with an holy Complacency of Soul, *My beloved is mine, and I am his, and his Desire is towards me.*

To

(a) *Jobb xv. 5.* (b) *Matth. xi. 28.* (c) *Isaiab xlvi. 22.*

To this End, diligently wait upon GOD, in the Use of all appointed Means, with a Soul thirsting after the blessed Benefits that are wont to be communicated in them; and cease not Day and Night, to pray with the greatest Fervency and Importunity, that GOD would create in you a clean Heart, and renew a right Spirit within you; and humbly protest before the LORD, that you will not let him go, except he bleſſ you.

And then, be zealous of every good Work. Zealously pursue the Death of Sin, in thy own Soul, being more watchful against the corrupt Workings of thy own Heart, and more strenuously resist the Allurements of the World, and the Temptations of the Devil, and his Instruments. Zealously set yourself to the Performance of the good, perfect, and acceptable Will of GOD, in all Things, and be very holy in all Manner of Conversation and Godliness. Embrace every Opportunity of serving GOD, and doing Good to all about you, that comes within your Sphere, and Capacity: And let your Light so shine before Men, that they may see your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven. Be more truly devout and pious towards GOD, walking in all his Ordinances and Commandments blameless; more strictly just, and true, and charitable, kind and beneficent to your Fellow-Creatures; and more sober, temperate, pure and circumspect in your whole Walk. Let every one cease judging the Hearts of others, and look more into their own Hearts. It is a shrewd Sign that they dwell but little at home, who are ever rambling abroad. Be more therefore in communing with your own Hearts, and rectifying all that is amiss

amiss there; and, in a Word, abhor that which is Evil, and cleave to that which is Good.

Set therefore, the Example of **CHRIST** before your Eyes, who always went about doing Good, and let the View thereof fire you with a noble Ambition to be, and do like him; for *he that saith he abideth in him, ought so to walk, even as he walked* (a). Can there be a brighter Pattern set before us than that of our blessed LORD and Master? Alas! there will be many Blurs, in the Copies which the best of Men set us, and we shall be in very great Danger of imitating their Foibles, and Defects, if we have our Eyes too much fixed upon them; but **CHRIST's** Example is wholly void of all Defect, and we need not fear the nearest Imitation of him, wherein soever he is imitable by us. Let the same Mind, therefore, be in you, which was in **CHRIST JESUS**; and evidence that you are his Disciples, by your sincere Endeavours, that, as he was in this World, so ye may be also.

Then, may you have Boldness, in a dying Hour, and at the Day of Judgment. It will administer no real Comfort to you, at the Hour of Death, to reflect upon your fair Estates, and large Possessions, your Posts, and Titles of Honour, your great Accomplishments, and the Esteem the World has for you; but to be able, in Sincerity, to reflect upon this Fruit and Proof of your Faith in **CHRIST**, and Interest in him, that you have been zealous of good Works, that you have made Conscience of doing your Duty to GOD, and Man, that you have acted with an holy Fervour of Soul, in doing the Will of GOD, and serving

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(a) *1 John ii. 6.*

your Generation, in all their Interests according to your Station, and Capacity; how will this refresh thy Soul, and alleviate the Pangs of Death, and make the Prospect thereof tolerable to you? So *Hezekiah*, in his Sickness, comforted himself, saying, (a) *Remember now, O LORD, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee, in Truth, and with a perfect Heart, and have done that which was Good in thy Sight.* So the holy Apostle *Paul* comforted himself, in the View of his Departure out of this World, saying, (b) *I am now ready to be offered, and the Time of my Departure is at Hand; I have fought the good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness.* And so too our glorious Redeemer fortified himself against his approaching Sufferings and Death, saying (c), *I have glorified thee on the Earth, I have finished the Work which thou gavest me to do; and now, O Father, glorify me with thine ownself.*

While the Wicked and Ungodly encounter Death, with trembling Joints, and aching Hearts, and take a Prospect of the approaching Judgment with utmost Horror, and Confusion of Mind, at the fearful Expectation of fiery Indignation to devour them: He that hath been truly zealous of good Works, may look upon the great Day of the Lord, with an holy Composure of Soul, and with the comfortable Thought, that it will be the Day of his open Espousal to the Son of God, the Day wherein all his good Deeds shall be openly acknowledged and abundantly rewarded.

And, Oh! the matchless Rewards that are reserved for such an one! Sometimes God is pleased greatly

(a) *Isa.* xxxviii. 3. (b) *2. Tim.* iv. 6, 7, 8. (c) *John* xvii. 4, 5.

greatly to reward his zealous Servants, with temporal Blessings in this World; but, however, if they should meet with little or no Reward here, yet great shall be their Reward in Heaven. Great beyond what any Tongue can now tell, or Heart conceive! By their being zealous of good Works, they have made to themselves Friends, which shall receive them into everlasting Habitations! For them is reserved the Inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, which fadeth not away! For them are prepared the Throne and Kingdom! For them are laid up the Joys of their Lord, even the Joys of the Marriage of the Lamb! For them awaits the Resurrection of the Just, and the Crown of immortal Life and Glory!

Well then, let us all take the Encouragement, and from this Time forward, make it the fixed Resolution of our Souls, to become zealous of good Works, to be stedfast, immovable, always abounding in the Work of the Lord, being assured that our blessed Saviour will make good that Word unto us (a), *They that have done Good shall come forth unto the Resurrection of Life.* Which God, of His infinite Mercy, grant may be the happy Portion of us all, thro' Jesus Christ, our Lord, to whom be glory for ever. *A M E N.*

(a) *John v. 29.*

*F I N I S.*